AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please **AMEND** claims 21-24, 30, and 35-37 as shown below.

This claim list replaces all prior claim lists in the application.

1-20. (Cancelled)

21. (Currently Amended) A search service system comprising:

at least one memory having program instructions and databases, the databases

~~including~~comprising:

a category classification database including at least one representative category

associated with one or more predetermined keyword groups, each of the predetermined

keyword groups including one or more representative keywords and other keywords

associated with the respective representative keywords;

a keyword database including at least one predetermined keyword group and

data indicative of a number of searches made using one or more representative

keywords or other keywords associated with the respective representative keywords,

each of the representative keywords representing the other keywords associated with

the representative keyword, which convey a same or similar meaning;

means for receiving a selection of a representative category associated with a

predetermined keyword group from a manager wherein the selection is made to reflect current

societal interest by the manager;

means for associating a representative keyword included in a first keyword group associated with a first representative category, with a second keyword group associated with a second representative category based on the selection of the manager;

means for receiving a search request from a user terminal through a communication network, the search request including a search keyword;

a first search unit for searching the category classification database for a representative category associated with the first keyword group including the search keyword, the first search unit determining the second keyword group related to the first keyword group by referring to the category classification database, wherein the second keyword group including the first keyword group;

a second search unit for searching the keyword database for the second keyword group and data indicative of a number of searches made using one or more representative keywords or other keywords included in the second keyword group;

an input order computing unit for computing input order of keywords included in the first keyword group by using[[;]] the second keyword group to compute a popularity rank of the keywords based on data indicative of a number of searches made using keywords included in the first keyword group and the second keyword group;

means for providing the user terminal with information showing popularity of keywords together with keyword search results so that a display of the user terminal displays the information showing popularity together with the keyword search results, the information showing popularity being related to the search request based, at least in part, upon the data indicative of the respective number of searches made using the respective representative keywords or other keywords included in the second keyword group; and

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means for updating the data indicative of a number of searches made using a representative keyword corresponding to the search keyword or other keywords of the second keyword group in response to the search request from the user terminal,

wherein the means for the updating the data adds a number of searches made using keywords represented by a first representative keyword to a number of searches made using the first representative keyword, where the first representative keyword and said keywords convey a same or similar meaning, wherein the first representative keyword is related to the search keyword.

22. (Currently Amended) The system of claim [[2 1]]21, wherein the information showing popularity of the searched keyword shows popularity ranks of the at least one keyword group associated with the searched representative category.

23. (Currently Amended) The system of claim [[2 1]]21, wherein the information showing popularity of the searched keyword shows a portion of the at least one keyword group associated with the searched representative category based upon the popularity of the at least one keyword group associated with the searched representative category.

24. (Currently Amended) The system of claim [[2 1]]21, wherein the information showing popularity of the searched keyword shows changes in the popularity of the searched keyword in association with the other keywords of the at least one keyword group associated with the searched representative category.

25-29. (Canceled)

30. (Currently Amended) A search service method comprising ~~the steps of:~~

maintaining at least one representative category associated with one or more predetermined keyword groups in a category classification database, each of the predetermined keyword groups including one or more representative keywords and other keywords associated with the respective representative keywords;

upon receipt of instructions from a manager wherein a selection is made to reflect current societal interest by the manager, associating a representative keyword included in a first keyword group associated with a first representative category, with a second keyword group associated with a second representative category based on the selection of the manager;

maintaining at least one predetermined keyword group and data indicative of a number of searches made using one or more representative keyword or other keywords associated with the respective representative keywords, in a keyword database, each of the representative keywords representing the other keywords associated with the respective representative keyword, which convey a same or similar meaning;

receiving a search request from a user terminal through a communication network, the search request including a search keyword;

searching the category classification database with a first search unit for a representative category associated with the first keyword group including the search keyword, the first search unit determines the second keyword group related to the first keyword group by referring to the category classification database, wherein the second keyword group includes the first keyword group;

searching the keyword database with a second search unit for the second keyword group data indicative of a number of searches made using one or more representative keywords or other keywords included in the second keyword group;

computing input order of keywords included in the first keyword group by using the second keyword group to compute a popularity rank of the keywords based on data indicative of a number of searches made using keywords included in the first keyword group and the second keyword group;

providing the user terminal with information showing popularity of keywords together with keyword search results so that a display of the user terminal displays the information showing popularity together with the keyword search results, the information showing popularity being related to the search request based, at least in part, upon the data indicative of the respective number of searches made using the respective representative keywords or other keywords included in the second keyword group; and

updating the data indicative of the number of searches made using a representative keyword corresponding to the search keyword or other keywords of the second keyword group in response to the search request from the user terminal,

wherein the updating the data adds a number of searches made using keywords represented by a first representative keyword to a number of searches made using the first representative keyword, where the first representative keyword and said keywords convey a same or similar meaning, wherein the first representative keyword is related to the search keyword.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30, wherein the information showing popularity of the searched keyword shows popularity ranks of the at least one keyword group associated with the searched representative category.

32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30, wherein the information showing popularity of the searched keyword shows a portion of the at least one keyword group associated with the searched representative category based upon the popularity of the at least one keyword group associated with the searched representative category.

33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30, wherein the information showing popularity of the searched keyword shows changes in the popularity of the searched keyword in association with the other keywords of the at least one keyword group associated with the searched representative category.

34. (Canceled)

35. (Currently Amended) A non-transitory computer-readable storage medium comprising an executable program which, when executed by one or more processors, performsto perform the steps of:

maintaining at least one representative category associated with one or more predetermined keyword groups in a category classification database, each of the predetermined keyword groups including one or more representative keywords and other keywords associated with the respective representative keywords;

upon receipt of instructions from a manager wherein a selection is made to reflect current societal interest by the manager, associating a representative keyword included in a first keyword group associated with a first representative category, with a second keyword group associated with a second representative category based on the selection of the manager;

maintaining at least one predetermined keyword group and data indicative of a number of searches made using one or more representative keyword or other keywords associated with

the respective representative keywords, in a keyword database, each of the representative keywords representing the other keywords associated with the respective representative keyword, which convey a same or similar meaning;

receiving a search request from a user terminal through a communication network, the search request including a search keyword;

searching the category classification database with a first search unit for a representative category associated with the first keyword group including the search keyword, the first search unit determines the second keyword group related to the first keyword group by referring to the category classification database, wherein the second keyword group includes the first keyword group;

searching the keyword database with a second search unit for the second keyword group data indicative of a number of searches made using one or more representative keywords or other keywords included in the second keyword group;

computing input order of keywords included in the first keyword group by using the second keyword group to compute a popularity rank of the keywords based on data indicative of a number of searches made using keywords included in the first keyword group and the second keyword group;

providing the user terminal with information showing popularity of keywords together with keyword search results so that a display of the user terminal displays the information showing popularity together with the keyword search results, the information showing popularity being related to the search request based, at least in part, upon the data indicative of the respective number of searches made using the respective representative keywords or other keywords included in the second keyword group; and

updating the data indicative of the number of searches made using a representative keyword corresponding to the search keyword or other keywords of the second keyword group in response to the search request from the user terminal,

wherein the updating the data adds a number of searches made using keywords represented by a first representative keyword to a number of searches made using the first representative keyword, where the first representative keyword and said keywords convey a same or similar meaning, wherein the first representative keyword is related to the search keyword.

36. (Currently Amended) The ~~one or more storage media~~non-transitory computer-readable storage medium of claim 35, wherein the information showing popularity of the searched keyword shows popularity ranks of the at least one keyword group associated with the searched representative category.

37. (Currently Amended) The ~~one or more storage media~~non-transitory computer-readable storage medium of claim 35, wherein the information showing popularity of the searched keyword shows a portion of the at least one keyword group associated with the searched representative category based upon the popularity of the at least one keyword group associated with the searched representative category.

38. (Canceled)